

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ASUNCION 1031

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, PA

SUBJ: CHANGES IN FOREIGN MILITARY TRAINING PROGRAM

REF: A) STATE 051768; B) ASUNCION 0799

1. ASSUMING PRESENT BUDGET LEVEL FOR MAP TRAINING CAN BE MAINTAINED AND COST INCREASE WILL RANGE IN NEIGHBORHOOD OF 30 TO 50 PERCENT OVER CURRENT EXPENDITURES, WE BELIEVE IMPACT WITH RESPECT TO PARAGUAY WILL NOT BE VERY SERIOUS. FOLLOWING COMMENTS ARE KEYED TO QUESTIONS RAISED IN PARA 5, REF A, IN SAME ORDER.

2. IMMEDIATE EFFECT ON BILATERAL RELATIONS. WE DO NOT BELIEVE NEW COSTS, WHEN THEY BECOME KNOWN, WILL OF THEMSELVES HAVE ANY SERIOUS EFFECT ON BILATERAL RELATIONS. NATURALLY GOP WILL BE DISAPPOINTED THAT PRESENT AMOUNT OF TRAINING WILL HAVE TO BE CURTAILED SOMEWHAT, BUT FACT THAT ITEMS OF GREATEST INTEREST TO GOP PROBABLY CAN BE RETAINED WILL SOFTEN BLOW CONSIDERABLY. IN GENERAL, GOP ATTACHES LESS IMPORTANCE TO TRAINING THAN TO GRANT MATERIEL, THE LOSS OF WHICH WILL BE MUCH MORE KEENLY FELT.

3. TRAINING INTERESTS OF HOST GOVERNMENT. GOP IS INTERESTED IN THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF TRAINING IN
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ORDER OF PRIORITY: 1) TOURS, 2) PROFESSIONAL OFFICER

DEVELOPMENT SCHOOLS, 3) TECHNICAL TRAINING, INCLUDING PILOT TRAINING. PARAGUAY IS NOT PRESENTLY PAYING FOR ANY U.S. TRAINING, AND IS NOT LIKELY TO PAY FOR ANY IN THE FUTURE AT THE NEW PRICES. MOST LIKELY, GOP WILL TRY TO MEET FUTURE TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FROM BRAZIL AND ARGENTINA.

4. TRAINING AND U.S. INTERESTS. SINCE THE MAIN JUSTIFICATION OF OUR SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IS POLITICAL, TYPES OF TRAINING MOST APPRECIATED BY THE GOP (SEE PARA 3 ABOVE) ARE OF THE GREATEST BENEFIT TO US INTERESTS. TRAINING TO WHICH THE GOP ATTACHES HIGHEST PRIORITY, I.E., TOURS AND PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLING, IS NOW BEING PROVIDED AND CAN CONTINUE TO BE PROVIDED IN SATISFACTORY AMOUNTS EVEN IF COSTS DOUBLE.

5. TRAINING TO BE ELIMINATED. PILOT TRAINING WAS ALREADY PLANNED FOR PHASE OUT IN FY-77. ENLISTED SKILL COURSES AND COMPANY GRADE PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLING WILL ALSO BE CURTAILED.

6. ALTERNATE SOURCES OF TRAINING. PARAGUAY VERY LIKELY WILL LOOK MORE TO BRAZIL AND ARGENTINA TO MEET FUTURE TRAINING REQUIREMENTS. WHILE THIS WILL RESULT IN SOME LOSS OF COMPETENCE, ESPECIALLY IN THE AIR FORCE, IT SHOULD NOT HAVE NOTICEABLE EFFECT ON BILATERAL RELATIONS OR WEAKEN THE INTEREST IN US MILITARY HARDWARE. HOWEVER, INTEREST IN US DOCTRINE IS BOUND TO DECLINE ACCORDINGLY.

7. ELIMINATION OF GRANT TRAINING. REF B ASSESSED THE OVERALL SIGNIFICANCE OF OUR GRANT SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH PARAGUAY. THE MAJOR COMPONENT OF THIS PROGRAM IN PARAGUAYAN EYES HAS BEEN THE GRANT MATERIAL. REF B EMPHASIZED THAT THE EXPECTED TERMINATION OF THIS TYPE OF SECURITY ASSISTANCE WILL GREATLY DIMINISH THE POLITICAL LEVERAGE WE DERIVED FROM MILITARY ASSISTANCE, WHICH IS ITS MAIN RATIONALE. THE ELIMINATION OF GRANT TRAINING AT THE SAME TIME WOULD JUST EXACERBATE
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THE SITUATION.
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